

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**DEVELOPING STRATEGIC LEADERS WHILE MAINTAINING THE WARFIGHTING
EDGE**

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ABSTRACT

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The Army must enhance leader development in order to maintain the relevance of its leaders and senior leaders for the contemporary operating environment (COE) of the 21st Century. The complex contemporary political stage and operations in support of the Global War on Terrorism have demanded a different kind of Army strategic leader. These officers must be sound tactical and operational leaders, be multi-disciplined, and possess senior management, cultural, and diplomatic skills not typically required of officers in the past. Army strategic leader development is not just important to our Army, its critical to our national defense. The development of a strategic leader takes years, possibly a career to properly develop. The Army core competency is conducting land warfare, and most educational and assignment opportunities focus on building expertise in this core competency. Army culture prefers leaders with significant tactical and operational experience over leaders that have other than tactical and operational experience. When you consider the facts, it is easy to understand why the leader developmental model centers on the tactical and operational Army. The principle question of our time is - is the current leader development model of education, training and assignment adequate enough to build future strategic leaders?

DEVELOPING STRATEGIC LEADERS WHILE MAINTAINING THE WARFIGHTING EDGE

General Schoomakers' vision is to develop Army Leaders that are multi-skilled, adaptable and flexible, comparable to the modern day pentathletes. The pentathlete has to be a superb individual athlete who competes in five very diverse and demanding athletic events. Army officers need to possess the same qualities for the military profession: unquestioned strength in their Army core competency, professional adaptability and flexibility, and multi-skilled with expertise in non-traditional areas such as multi-cultural, interagency and inter-governmental settings. All these important characteristics are the goals of the General's pentathlete vision. The Chief of Staff of the Army's (CSA) image for future leader development, as described in the 28 July 2005 Officer Professional Management System 3 (OPMS 3) Steering Committee slide deck, describes the objectives and attributes of the soldier pentathlete. This multi-skilled soldier pentathlete must be a strategic and creative thinker, a competent warfighter, a manager of change in large organizations, a skilled statesman, and a sophisticated enthusiast of cultures.¹ Further, the leader possesses the following attributes: decisiveness, competent and confident decision making, empathetic, professionally educated, and an effective communicator.² The current leadership development model, albeit good, does not meet the Chief of Staff's vision of building the Army leader pentathlete. The guidance provided within the context of the CSA vision offers a superb starting point for improving the current leader development model, as described in Strategic Leader Development.³ The purpose of this Strategy Research Project (SRP) is to identify and suggest necessary leader development changes in order to build future Army strategic leaders and create the pentathlete capable of handling future complex strategic military challenges. The process used in order to expose required changes will be: a discussion on contemporary challenges, describes Army core competencies and culture, reviews leader development regulation and recent development studies, and concludes with recommendations to strengthen the current leader development model.

Complex Challenges

The Army must enhance leader development in order to maintain the relevance of its leaders and senior leaders to operate in the contemporary operating environment (COE) of the 21st Century.⁴ The complex contemporary political environment and operations in support of the Global War on Terrorism have demanded a different kind of Army strategic leader. These officers must be sound tactical and operational leaders; they must be multi-disciplined and exhibit superior management, cultural, and diplomatic skills not typically required of officers in

the past. The realities of the first 21st Century U.S. battlefields and the challenges of running an Army at war require flexible and agile leaders who operate confidently in a culturally difficult and ambiguous environment. These changes and demands on our leaders require a review of how the Army develops its leaders, especially its senior leaders.⁵ Army strategic leader development is not just important to our Army; it's a national issue, that's vital to our defense. Because developing strategic leaders is critical to our national defense, we need a sound model for leader development which begins during pre-commissioning and spans a full Army career. To put strategic leadership in context, Leonard Wong and Don Snyder concisely describe the strategic leader in Chapter 28 of second edition of The Future of the Army Profession. They believe that our strategic leaders must possess uniquely sophisticated ways of thinking and leading; they need the ability to function at a level that is more cognitively complex, to understand the 3rd and 4th order of effects in solving problems or performing tasks, to extend their vision over a longer horizon, and to balance higher levels of ambiguity and risk⁶. Further, strategic leaders must operate at multiple levels inside and outside the organization and successfully navigate the complex senior level political environment, which requires good intuition and consensus-building skills rather than directing others and relying principally on hard facts and conventional assumptions. In short, they must lead effectively.⁷ These particular skills have always been necessary, but our leader development model must be constantly validated and revised to meet the new demands on our Army's leadership. Strategic Leadership has in the past been defined as leadership at the appointed level, three-star general or above. However, in the contemporary operating environment, strategic leadership begins at the O-6/Colonel level.⁸

Department of the Army Pamphlet 350-58 (13 October 1994), *Leader Development for America's Future*, describes the Army's approach to leader development and explains that the Army from its earliest days has recognized the need for leadership and change in leadership development.⁹ The leader development system is a progressive and sequential system that synchronizes training and education, assignments and experience, and self development. Accordingly, institutional training and education, operational assignments, and self development are the pillars for Army Leader Development. This model enables officers to acquire skills, knowledge, and behavior (SKB's) over time that supports their growth as leaders.¹⁰ Further, Army Regulation 600-3 (14 October 2005), *The Army Personnel Proponent System*, claims that, "leader development is the means for growing competent, confident, self aware leaders who are prepared for the challenges of the future in combined arms, Joint, interagency, intergovernmental, and multinational operations."¹¹ Army leaders developed under this model

must be agile and adaptable in all realms of the joint arena and interagency environment. But does the focus on the Army's essential core competencies, its culture, and human nature actually inhibit strategic leader development? Or are some key developmental facets lacking in the model?

Army Core Competency, Culture and Human Nature

The development of a strategic leader evolves over an entire career. Even so, many Army leaders are promoted to senior levels with few developed strategic management skills. The Army core competency is the conduct of land warfare. So most educational and assignment opportunities, along with some self-development focus on building expertise in this core competency. The complexity of land warfare and the Army's many officer military occupational specialties (MOS) lead to specialization and career-tracking. Single career-tracking can be a double edge sword: It produces leaders with tremendous competencies in a particular specialty, but provide few generalist competencies sought after by senior leaders. Army culture prefers leaders with significant tactical and operational experience over leaders who have other experiences and assignments than tactical and operational experience, as a recent Brigade Commander Study shows. The study included 48 Tactical Brigade Command (FY06) selectees and compared the number of selectees with traditional Army assignments to the number with joint and/or multidiscipline assignments: Only twenty-nine percent had one joint or multidiscipline assignment in their past fifteen assignments and less than two percent had multiple joint or multidiscipline assignments. Army officers who remain in the muddy boot Army, which many seek to do, have few joint, multi-discipline, and cross cultural experiences that develop critical strategic leader skills.¹² Promotion and command selection are the desired career rewards for most Army officers, and the paths to those rewards are both professional success and extensive tactical and operational experience. B.H. Liddell Hart describes the professional military mindset: "The only thing harder than getting new ideas into the military mind is getting old ones out."¹³

Human nature is the wildcard: You may change the system, but individual character, personality, and leadership behavior are harder to change. The leadership current development model emphasizes training and education, increasingly more challenging assignments, and self-development. It offers a balanced approach to shape a leader's behavior, but it is not always predictive. The goal is to develop certain professional ethics and values that help guide leaders throughout their careers. The challenges of prosecuting land warfare and the struggle to maintain a high level of competency can keep good officers from branching out to gain skills and

traits valuable to senior leaders. The complexity of the contemporary operating environment demands strategic leadership that can foster consensus-making, keep an open mind, be a positive team builder, and possess vision. When you consider the facts, it is easy to understand why the current leader developmental model centers on the single-tracked tactical and operational Army. Does the Army require a new approach to leader development? Or do we just need to improve on an already effective model? ¹⁴

Leader Development

The principle question becomes - Is the current leader development model of training and education, assignment opportunities, and self development adequate? If not, what do we need to change in order to develop better strategic leaders?¹⁵ The current development model is adequate for producing effective leaders of large complex combat organizations; however, the model should be revised to include more joint, civil, and cross-cultured education and assignment opportunities to further strategic leader development. What is the right developmental model? What is the magic that produces a strategic leader? There is no single absolute model or magic. But a career of progressive multilevel education and assignment opportunities that facilitates the desired development required to build Strategic Leaders is a good start. The challenges will be to change a time honored model and overcome professional biases. The Army has made many changes to its leader development system over the past 35 years which have significantly increased the effectiveness and competence of Army leaders.¹⁶ Some examples since 1971 are the Officer Professional Development System (OPMS) I, Review of Education and Training for Officers (RETO), the Professional Development of Officers Study (PDOS), OPMS II, and recently the Review of Education, Training, and Assignment of Leaders Task Force (RETAL).¹⁷ Army Transformation and the Global War on Terrorism may be the first change mechanisms that triggered a true revision and cultural change. Record promotion rates to major and lieutenant colonel and changes to education selection policies are indicators of change. For example, it is no longer guaranteed that a successful battalion commander will be selected for the War College or promotion to colonel, as in the past. Further, the Army is considering consolidating traditional branches, which is a departure from Army cultural norms. Does this mean we are on our way to developing better strategic Leaders? No: It simply implies some hard truths (norms) in our Army culture are changing.¹⁸

The current Army leader development model of “three interconnected pillars: institutional training and education, operational assignments, and self development” is sound.¹⁹ The

marriage of education, professional study, and practical experience that spans a career leads to an effective strategic leader. The U.S. Army War College Strategic Leadership Course outlines the development of Army leaders at three levels: Direct (taught at the basic and captain's career courses), organizational (taught at the Intermediate Level Education Course), and Strategic (taught at the War College).²⁰ Traditional assignments that support the education and training process are serving as Platoon Leader and Company Commander at the tactical level; serving as Battalion/Brigade S3/Executive Officer followed by Battalion command with joint and departmental staff opportunities that are primarily focused down at tactical and operational levels, and O-6 level command with senior joint and departmental staff opportunities again centered around tactical and operational assignments, with modest exposure to strategic level challenges. Increased cross cultural, civil, interagency and inter-governmental education, exchanges, and assignments can improve the leader development model and will improve future Army senior leaders.²¹ These initiatives and changes must be integrated early in the officer's professional development and pursued throughout a career. Consider the following as a possibility in revising our current system.

The leader development model used in this research project will begin at pre-commissioning and proceed to Colonel Level. The Army building block approach to education and experience are the ways and means of developing Army leaders. The leader development ends are senior army leaders who can command large, complex, combat formations. The ends should provide senior army leaders capable of commanding large, complex combat formations and strategic military organizations. So a change in the current ways and means of education and experience will be required to realize an end that includes strategic leadership education and experience.

A Strategy for Building Strategic Leaders

As previously discussed, the Army rewards those who remain in the muddy boots Army. Throughout its history, the Army has embraced men of action over the more contemplative individual. The Army's jurisdiction is to win the nations wars; this requires men of action.²² Historical examples of men of action are Washington, Jackson, Lee, Grant, Pershing, MacArthur, Patton, and Ridgeway to name a few. However, there have been great Army leaders who were more contemplative than men of action, such as Marshall, Eisenhower, Bradley, and Westmoreland. Persons of action are purposely cultivated early in the Army profession because of its core competency; however, these individuals must also develop the contemplative skills necessary to lead strategic organizations as Marshall and Eisenhower did

so effectively during and following World War II. Even so, it is easy to understand why Army professionals focus on warfighting competencies over all else: The nation depends on winning wars. But as leaders mature to the highest level, there is a stocky shift from warfighting expertise to administration of enormous national assets. The nation must also depend upon this expertise. The professional challenge at this level is to maintain the range of knowledge and experience that supports the nation's ability to deter and win wars if threatened.²³ This professional capability and expert knowledge must continue to evolve as the environment becomes more complex.²⁴

Many in the profession believe that higher education alone will strengthen the profession. But the requirement for a master's degree alone will not increase the body of expertise necessary to produce senior Army leaders that are effective at the strategic level. Graduate level study does provide leaders an opportunity to expand their knowledge of organizations and their behavior, history, international relations, strategy, economics and government. Additionally, graduate work gives organizations credibility with appropriately credentialed senior leaders that are managing our nation's strategic organizations. Baccalaureate or master's degrees do provide certain advantages of higher education; they show a commitment and dedication to personal improvement. However, they cannot be the sole measurement of potential. The Army has established the entry-level education requirement for the officer corps as a baccalaureate degree. But there is no real requirement for graduate education unless officers are assigned to an educational institution or within a specialty branch. However, most leader development studies place a premium on graduate education.

It is unrealistic to place a hard requirement for the officer corps to have a graduate level degree at any point in their career in order to advance. Time and opportunity for graduate studies may not be available to all officers, like the universal Captains Career Course (CCC) or Intermediate Level Education (ILE). It is reasonable though to encourage the officer corps to pursue graduate studies as part of their self development and to provide maximum opportunities for fully funded graduate programs.²⁵ The key to professional development is exposure or experiential learning. Senior leaders must be exposed to the right balance of training, education, and assignments over a career in order to acquire the range of knowledge to be effective at the highest levels of service and government. The Army profession has an exceptional leader development model. What is needed is additional exposure that will support developing strategic leaders. What is that right balance that supports a successful leader developmental model? Richard Laquement specifies four broad categories of professional expertise within the Army: Military-Technical, Human Development, Moral-Ethical, and Political-

Cultural. Army leaders currently do well in all categories except the Political-Cultural category.²⁶ This category requires more interpersonal, diplomatic and negotiation skills – somewhat alien to a system that demands action over contemplation. Nonetheless, effective senior leaders must develop Political-Cultural expertise. This key requirement for senior leader development can begin at the earliest stages of the career cycle.²⁷

Current education requirements over a career include a; four-year degree and pre-commissioning source requirements, Officers Basic Course (OBC), Captains Career Course (CCC), limited graduate level opportunities at the Captain level, Intermediate Level Education (ILE), and finally the Senior Service College (SSC). In the Operations Career Field, along which the majority of Army Senior Leaders develop, key developmental assignments over a career include; Platoon Leader, Battalion Staff Officer, Company Commander, Brigade Staff Officer, Battalion/Brigade Operations Officer, Battalion/Brigade Executive officer, Division/Corps/Army Staff Officer, Joint Staff Officer, Battalion Commander, Division/Corps/Army/Joint Staff Officer, Brigade Command, COCOM/Joint Staff/Army Staff officer. There are numerous gates an Army officer in the Operations Career Field must negotiate throughout a career, most of them focused on serving in service specific positions. However there are opportunities in the developmental model the Army can exploit to improve the development of strategic leaders.²⁸ Can civil, interagency, inter-governmental and cross cultural exchanges and assignments improve development of the Army's senior leaders?²⁹ Is there opportunity in the officers' already full career to participate in these programs? If so, what is the optimum exposure time?

The Army is a competitive profession with several promotion and selection processes. The process proceeds according to a deliberate shrinking model – the higher you go, the fewer opportunities are available. But in recent years the Intermediate Level Resident Education opportunities have become universal and promotion rates to Major and LTC are unprecedented – better than 90%. This is due in part to supporting officer retention requirements of an Army at war; however, the system cannot sustain itself in the long term. Getting the right officer in the right position at the right time requires a critical selection process that spans a career. The challenge will be to identify and cultivate the strategic or senior leader with selection rates for promotion, training and education are so high. Currently, the first real personnel cut is selection to Battalion and Brigade Command – the 15-18 year point of service.³⁰ The Review of Education, Training, and Assignment of Leaders (RETAL) Task Force recommend a Leader Development Panel to “select the best operational career field officers” for future assignments “outside the traditional track.”³¹ This selection board is similar to the former Command and General Staff College (CGSC) selection; it will identify the more competitive officers for future

assignments. This may be the first time that the Army gets a serious look at potential Army Senior Leaders. A competitive selection system is a valuable tool for developing Army strategic leaders. Understanding the process from pre-commissioning to promotion to colonel is essential for identifying missed opportunities for strategic leader development for operations career field officers.

Pre-Commissioning

Officers are accessed numerous ways – U.S. Military Academy, Reserve Officers Training Course (ROTC), Officers Candidate School (OCS), and some direct appointments. Not all commissioning sources produce the same quality of new officers. And there are no professional degree requirements for candidates to become Army officers. The Army does require all its candidates to have a four-year college degree, with few exceptions. Candidates must also perform to basic physical, mental, and leadership standards which are tested by the commissioning source. The standards are certified and monitored by the institutional Army. No matter the commissioning source, during this pre-commissioning process young men and women develop the basics for military service. Beyond the basics for commissioning, there should be opportunity to broaden the cadet's realm of knowledge so that it contributes to the prospective officers' professional education. These opportunities should support the four categories of expertise: Military-Technical, Human Development, Moral-Ethical, and Political-Cultural. They should provide cadet with challenges and rewards, setting the foundation for strategic leader development.³²

Cadet Command should levy additional academic requirements to scholarship and contract cadets in the following areas: History, Sociology, Political Science, Information Technology, Psychology, Physical Education/Health courses during the entire contract, and Geography above the required military and individual degree curriculum.³³ This requirement establishes a common baseline for pre-commissioning for all cadets. Further, these academic areas directly relate to the Army's core competency of warfighting and build the soldier/leader physically, mentally, and technically for future leadership and operational demands. Language and cultural exchanges should be encouraged, with incentives for cadets proving expertise in this area.³⁴ Cross cultural education and expertise is desired in developing senior leaders. North Georgia College and State University, for example, offers students that are members of an Army Reserve organization the opportunity to study language at the Defense Language Institute (DLI). Cadets attending this program will receive an associate's degree upon completion of the course and return to North Georgia to complete their degree and

commissioning program.³⁵ Cadet Command must explore other unique opportunities and make them available to all ROTC programs. These academic, language, and cultural programs will better prepare our future leaders for the challenges of a military career; they will be foundational for strategic leader development. However, we must avoid sweeping changes that could affect recruiting and retention of prospective ROTC students. Serious strategic leader development at the pre-commissioning stage, however, is not necessary or even productive beyond selected foundational study. We cannot overlook the professional maturity and personal commitment of the pre-commissioning candidate.³⁶

Company Grade Officer – Lieutenants and Captains

Upon commissioning, the newly minted officer attends the officer basic course in a selected branch (Infantry, Armor, Aviation, Transportation, etc). Officers are then assigned to their first duty stations. They then gain entry-level experiences as a platoon leaders and battalion staff officers. This early career phase is where the officer is charged with small groups of soldiers and equipment and build's a solid foundation for future military service. There are no real opportunities to develop lieutenants for strategic leadership – nor should there be. Lieutenants have a two year vision; they are concerned with small-unit execution, cohesion, and unit maintenance. This phase of the model centers on building Army officer competencies and further developing professional commitment. Self-development - such as language training, personal military study, volunteer work, and off-duty education - will further their strategic leader development. Officers participating in self development programs show professional commitment; this sets them apart from junior officers who choose not to expand their professional knowledge. Leaders at the Battalion and Brigade level can pursue self-development through their Junior Officer Leader Development Program. They have the opportunity to build expertise and maturity in the art and science of warfare at the company level. The standard time period for promotion to captain must be no less than four years.³⁷

Promotion to Captain and Captain Career Course attendance further develops leaders as they prepare for company command and tactical staff work at the battalion and brigade level. Company command provides the opportunity for direct, hands-on, leadership of medium sized Army organizations. The vision at the captain level (company commander) again spans about two years. It focuses on execution, unit cohesion and unit maintenance. The focus is within the organization (internal); but, unlike lieutenants, the company commander begins to look two levels up – brigade level. Additionally, captains for the first time perform primary staff duties at the battalion and brigade level. These staff duties introduce captains to long-range planning

processes, managing resources, and consensus building in large organizations. What are the relationships between the career phase (Captain) and the goal of developing strategic leaders? This stage can be an early entry point for possible strategic foundational leadership development. Officers spend up to seven years as captains, the Army can capitalize on this opportunity by offering graduate education and entry level senior staff or cross culture developmental positions and exchanges, thereby exposing young officers to other service and foreign cultures, to strategic long range planning, budgeting, resource management, and politics. Captains are thus positioned to begin preparing for strategic leadership.³⁸ If these programs are limited to one or two year assignment cycles, the Army could offer this to the majority of operations career field officers.

The Army does not take advantage of this career period because captains are not “vested” or “tenured”. So the Army assumes some risk by committing valuable resources to officers at the 7-10 year point in their career. Captains also approach a key decision point regarding their continued professional commitment to the Army at the 7-10 year point: Stay Army or get out. The Army can begin early strategic leader development by taking advantage of the time period between company command and level two education – Intermediate Level Education (ILE). To be eligible for promotion to major, officers must have served six years as captains. During these six years, officers must attend the Captains Career Course (CCC), command a company, serve as battalion or brigade level staff officers, participate in cross-cultural exchanges and language training, or pursued Advance Civil Schooling (ACS). Much leader development occurs at the captain level.³⁹

Field Grade Officer – Major and Lieutenant Colonel

The appropriate career period to fully exploit training, education, and experience at the strategic level comes at the major and lieutenant colonel (LTC) levels – the field grade level. Officers at this level are mature and committed to the military profession (tenured); and should begin serious strategic leader development. Intermediate Level Education (ILE) must be the educational entry point for foundational strategic study; it could be expanded to include Advanced Civil Schooling opportunities not only for specialty branches but also for operations career field branches. Majors must attend ILE early in order to take advantage of nontraditional education and training and after assignment opportunities. The Army provides tremendous opportunities following ILE for officers to learn how the Army and other governmental agencies and foreign governments work. Beyond the experience of being with troops, they can experience managing enormous resources at the joint, cross-cultural organizations, or

department level. This exposure to leadership and decision making at the strategic level increases the professional expertise of the Army officer corps.⁴⁰

Key traditional developmental opportunities for majors remain battalion/brigade operations and executive officer positions. Then the goal of most officers at the LTC level is to command a battalion size organization. Command opportunities are limited in number and duration, however, and are highly competitive. Commanding a battalion is desirable but not necessarily a measure of success at the LTC level. Competitive officers will spend up to four of ten years of their field grade service in Army key developmental positions at battalion level organizations (Battalion/Brigade Operations Officer, Battalion/Brigade Executive officer, and Battalion Commander). They have significant time and opportunity for further strategic level education and experience. Expanding key developmental positions to include joint, cross culture organizations, and service (department) staffs is important in the Army Profession and Strategic Leader Development. Promotion to LTC comes in no less than six years of service as a major.⁴¹

Suppose there were key developmental requirements to serve up to two years in a strategic or non-traditional organization prior to and after promotion to LTC. This requirement would be for two tours, one as a major and one as a LTC. This requirement would assure officers had diversity and exposure at the strategic level that of future strategic leaders need. By contrast, the current Army model concerns itself only with Army centric career gates, which include military education, promotion, Army key developmental positions and command. This career program emphasizes troop time and warfighting expertise at the expense of everything else. In order to improve the Army's professional jurisdiction, mandated opportunities beyond traditional Key Developmental Positions (KDP) must be included in the strategic development model in order to provide the diversity and exposure to the highest levels required of future strategic leaders. Consider that in a twenty-year career, officers spend less than half of that time in Army key leadership developmental positions or command – from Lieutenant to Colonel. What are we doing with the other ten to twelve years? Should the Army concern itself with placing its officers in joint, cross-cultural organizations, and departmental level staff positions throughout the developmental model of officers careers in order to build strategic leaders. Or should the Army begin to program officers for strategic leadership only at the field grade level?

Colonel

Some might argue that strategic leadership begins at the O6/Colonel level. The development model peaks at this point, but does not culminate. Further Training/education,

assignment and self-development will continue until retirement. There are very few opportunities to command at the colonel level. Most colonels, following War College, are assigned to a service department or to a joint or inter-agency staff. Opportunities to lead, manage, and direct in traditional service and non-traditional organizations increase at the Colonel level. Their professional development and body of expert knowledge must be sophisticated enough that senior leaders, as colonel, easily adapt to their new strategic level traditional or non-traditional environment. Colonels and general officers (G.O.) will spend the majority of their career in positions that require effective cross cultural, inter-departmental and inter-governmental interaction. These skills must be cultivated early in order to assure the strategic leader skills required of the profession. Promotion to colonel should come no less than five years time in grade as a LTC.

The Leader Development Model - Recommendation

The Army Leader Development Model as described in Department of the Army Pamphlet 350-58 is a sound model; it develops professional warfighters with comprehensive skills in the core competency of the Army. But this model does little to provide senior leader development or support the CSA's vision of the Leader Penathlete. The developmental model should be expanded to include strategic level competencies. No revolution is required, just an evolution of a sound leader development system.⁴² A leader development task force must be established through the U.S. Army War College to facilitate this evolution. This task force must review officer development from pre-commissioning to colonel and specify how the Army can improve strategic leader development for the future – in war and peace.

Strategic Leader Development foundational education and training starts early during the pre-commissioning stage and continues through the lieutenant level. Self development and mentorship provide excellent means to build on the leader development foundation. Begin strategic leader development during pre-commissioning by requiring additional education requirements and provide incentives to cadets that pursue language and cross-cultural education.

Establish initial strategic leader education and training and assignment at the senior captain level. Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS) opportunities must continue to be offered and increased for captains in specialty and operation career branches.⁴³ Utilization tours following ACS should not exceed two years. Utilization assignments following graduate school can include exchange programs, internships, and limited fellowship opportunities in order to further

develop foundational expertise beyond the Army's core competencies. These assignments can also be offered to highly competitive officers without an ACS commitment.

Focus on building strategic leaders early in field grade service; at this point in the officers' career they must demonstrate the professional maturity and sufficient education and experience to build a solid foundation for future strategic leader growth. The foundational training and assignments offered to senior captains complements further field grade strategic leader development; the critical point for strategic leader development, however, must begin early in the field grade years of development. Majors can compete for ACS and joint and interagency assignments. Selected joint and interagency assignments must be coded as Enhanced Key Leadership Positions and offered to our most successful officers.

Attendance at a Senior Service College following multiple operational and strategic level assignments, as recommended in this strategic research project, will provide more experienced senior leaders who have mastered the Army's core competency and also have acquired expertise in strategic organizations and processes – Army Senior Leader Pentathlete.⁴⁴ Two suggested points in Army officers' careers to consider when revising the developmental model for strategic leaders are at senior captain and field grade officer (Major and LTC).

Army culture still measures officers' capabilities and potential according to their knowledge of tactical and operational art at or below the division level. Currently, knowledge of how strategic organizations run is not a desired trait for Army officers early in their career. The framework of development, time, and progression gates are easy to understand. Only compelling circumstances would warrant a change in this career paradigm. Changing the whole Army culture to develop strategic leaders is not necessary; what's required is a commitment by Army senior leadership to make small cultural changes and solicit professional buy-in and acceptance from the officer corps. Not many Army officers are recognized for their negotiation, consensus-making, and program management skills; conversely, officers are revered for their tactical and field prowess. The Army officer corps thrives on the artifacts of the organization - its Warrior Ethos, Army Values, and above all staying in the muddy boots Army. This attitude prevails through the colonel level if not the general officer level.⁴⁵

Finally, if changes are made in order to develop future senior strategic leaders, experience (exposure) will be the key component in the strategic leader developmental model. In order to achieve this goal, the developmental process must start early in an officers' career, accepted as a good thing by the officer corps. And the Army leadership must encourage the best officers to pursue strategic assignments at the joint, cross culture organization, and department level. Additionally, there must be incentives for officers to pursue this path. If the

culture rewards only officers who stay muddy boots, there will not be a fundamental change to encourage strategic development. The results will remain: senior Army officers without the adaptability and diversity to successfully operate as strategic leaders in a non-traditional environment. The Army can adjust to fully exploit and institutionalize education and assignment opportunities, culminating with the senior service college experience, which will lead to an effective and confident future Army Strategic Leader – beyond the War College.

There is no doubt that our Army produces the best combat leader in the world. But the CSA has a greater vision for future officer professional development. He envisions Army officers as multi-skilled pentathletes; he has expanded the leader development model to include strategic leader development.⁴⁶ The Army culture must embrace this vision and change. Accordingly, The Army's survival as a relevant force may not depend solely on warfighting prowess, but on a balance of political and managerial prowess at the strategic level gained over a career of education and training, assignments, and self-development. Strategic growth of our officer corps must be an integral part of the Army vision for the future!⁴⁷

Endnotes

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